

CONSTRUCT CIVIL ENGINEERING FACILITY FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

1.0 NAME OF ACTION

Construct Civil Engineering Facility, Moody Air Force Base, Georgia.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Proposed Action

Moody Air Force Base (AFB) proposes to construct a new Civil Engineer Squadron facility to house the Explosives Ordnance Disposal Flight (EOD), Environmental Flight (CEV), and the Work Information Management Section (WIMS) of the Resources Flight (CER). This facility will be properly sized and configured to meet installation and individual customer needs for each of these three flights. The proposed facility will be 13,600 square feet in size, consisting of a concrete foundation and floor slab, structural frame, walls, standing-seam metal roof, fire protection system, HVAC, utilities, landscaping, and sidewalks. The project provides all other necessary support for a complete and usable facility.

2.2 Alternatives

Two alternatives to the proposed action were identified and evaluated. These two alternatives are: 1) alternative siting A and 2) the "no action" alternative.

3.0 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

3.1 PROPOSED ACTION

There would be no significant impacts to the environment as a result of implementation of the proposed action. Temporary air emissions would occur during the construction phase, but these would be of a short duration and would not affect overall air quality on the base. No impacts to vegetation resources, water resources, cultural resources, or wetlands would occur. The project would result in positive benefits for the military mission and for safety and security concerns. The Air Force will consult with the State Historic Preservation Office before implementing the action; the Georgia State Clearinghouse and local government offices were consulted during the public comment period of this review.

3.2 ALTERNATIVES

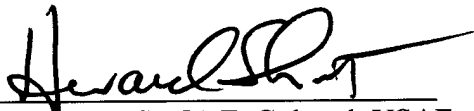
There would be no significant impacts to the environment by implementing either of the two alternatives to the proposed action.

4.0 CONCLUSION:

The attached EA was prepared and evaluated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (Public Law 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and according to 32 Code of Federal Regulations 989, *The Environmental Impact Analysis Process*. I have concluded that the proposed project to

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construct a Civil Engineer Squadron facility does not constitute a "major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" when considered individually or cumulatively in the context of the referenced act, including both direct and indirect impacts. Therefore, no further study is required, and a Finding of No Significant Impact is thus warranted.


HOWARD SHORT, Colonel, USAF
Chairperson, 347 RQW Environmental Protection Committee

26 NOV 03
Date

CONSTRUCT CIVIL ENGINEERING FACILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 Background, Purpose, and Need for the Proposed Action

Moody Air Force Base (AFB) proposes to construct a new Civil Engineer Squadron (CES) facility to house the Explosives Ordnance Disposal Flight (EOD), Environmental Flight (CEV), and the Work Information Management Section (WIMS) of the Resources Flight (CER). This facility will be properly sized and configured to meet installation and individual customer needs for each of these three flights. The existing facilities that house these flights are outdated and inadequate. Each flight has specific needs and requirements which are not being met at their present locations. The Environmental Flight uses a portion of a larger facility constructed in 1941 which is already beyond capacity, thereby forcing CEV personnel to share overcrowded and poorly configured office space, none of which is designed for their specific mission requirements. The EOD Flight facility was constructed in 1954 and is undersized and poorly configured with very little storage and vehicle maintenance space. The WIMS is currently using a trailer, which was constructed in 1986 and is inadequate in size, configuration, structure, and security for housing the vast amount of computer hardware located within the facility. Additionally, the EOD Flight facility is geographically isolated from the rest of the Civil Engineer Squadron complex, which hampers communication with other squadron personnel. The proposed facility would eliminate these problems by consolidating these three flights into an adequately sized building located immediately adjacent to the current Civil Engineer Squadron complex.

1.2 Location of the Proposed Action

Moody Air Force Base is located in south-central Georgia about 10 miles northeast of Valdosta. The project location is on Main Base near the South Gate in the parking lot on Florida Road adjacent to Building 981. Refer to Figures 1 and 2 for the general location of Moody AFB and the project location.

1.3 Scope of the Environmental Review

Issues which could potentially be impacted by the proposed action include:

- Air Resources
- Water Resources
- Vegetation Resources
- Cultural Resources

1.4 Applicable Regulatory Requirements

The command at Moody AFB has the responsibility to ensure that all projects comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, Executive Order 11990, Executive Order 13112, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and other applicable environmental laws and regulations.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Minimum Selection Criteria

The Air Force considered several alternatives to the proposed action. In the initial screening of these alternatives, the Air Force took into consideration minimum selection criteria. Only those alternatives that met these criteria were considered suitable for detailed analysis. The selection criteria were conformance to existing laws, Air Force Special Operations Command and Department of the Air Force policy and regulations, compatibility with the Base Master Plan, and satisfactorily meeting the needed requirements (size and proximity to the current CES compound).

2.2 Detailed Description of Proposed Action

The 200' x 68' (13,600 square feet) Civil Engineer Squadron facility will house the CEV Flight, the EOD Flight, and the WIMS of the Resources Flight. The facility will consist of a reinforced concrete foundation and floor slab, structural frame, walls, standing-seam metal roof, fire protection system, HVAC, utilities, landscaping, and sidewalks. The Environmental section will include a large conference room and a library. The EOD section will include a vehicle bay, maintenance bay, and an ordnance storage area. The WIMS portion of the facility will include several storage rooms and a properly sized and configured computer room. The project provides all other necessary support for a complete and usable facility. The proposed location of this facility is immediately adjacent to the existing CES compound and will allow personnel access to the main compound without crossing roads or other safety hazards.

2.3 Alternatives

The alternatives to the proposed action are: 1) alternative siting and 2) the "no action" alternative.

2.3.1 Alternative Siting

One site (alternative siting A) was identified as a potential site for the construction of the new Civil Engineer Squadron facility (refer to Figures 2 and 3 for the location of these alternative sites). Other potential alternative sites (refer to Figure 3) were rejected because they did not conform to the minimum selection criteria (e.g. geographically isolated from the Civil Engineer Squadron complex).

2.3.2 The "No Action" Alternative

The last alternative to the proposed action is the "no action" alternative. Under this alternative, the Civil Engineer Squadron facility would not be constructed. The environmental impacts of this alternative will be analyzed further in this document.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Introduction

The physical and biological components of the proposed project area are described in Moody AFB's Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and in the Moody AFB Natural Heritage Inventory Final Report. These documents are available for review in the Environmental Flight. Only information specific to the proposed project location will be discussed here.

None of the analyzed alternatives would have adverse impacts to areas of critical environmental concern, prime or unique farm land, coastal zones, wilderness areas, flood plains, wild or scenic rivers, hazardous waste or environmental restoration program sites, archaeological remains, historic sites, or Native American religious concerns.

3.2 Air Resources

The Clean Air Act dictates that National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), established by the Environmental Protection Agency, must be maintained nationwide. The NAAQS have included standards for six "criteria" pollutants: ozone, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, "respirable" particulate, sulfur dioxide, and lead. Lowndes County is an attainment area for all NAAQS "criteria" pollutants. Specifically, in regards to the Clean Air Act and regulation of installation emissions, Moody AFB is not classified as a major source of criteria pollutants and does not have a Title V permit. Currently, Moody AFB operates under a synthetic minor permit for hazardous air pollutants issued 31 August 1998.

3.3 Vegetation Resources

The proposed project area is comprised of an urban area with small islands of urban plantings, primarily comprised of bahia grass lawn and scattered ornamental shrubs and trees. The trees in the area consist of small Bradford pears (*Pyrus communis*) and two Chinese elms (*Ulmus parvifolia*). The vegetation on the two alternative sites is similar to that of the proposed project. Alternative site A has a bahia grass lawn and numerous ornamental tree plantings, comprised primarily of young live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) and young loblolly pines (*Pinus taeda*).

3.4 Water Resources

The installation is located on a level plateau between the Withlacoochee River to the west and the Alapaha River to the east. Surface water, including storm water, in the proposed project area flows north into Beatty Branch, which then flows into Cat Creek and then into the Withlacoochee River. The Withlacoochee River is located within Upper Suwanee River Watershed, which drains into the Lower Suwanee Watershed and eventually into the Gulf of Mexico.

Storm water on the installation is managed by the Environmental Flight through the Storm Water Management Program and the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Storm water originating from the proposed project areas is routed through a single stormwater drainage ditch to Outfall 1. The proposed project area is not included within a 100-year floodplain. There are no jurisdictional wetlands located within the boundaries of the proposed project area. There are no water resources or wetlands located on alternative site A.

3.5 Cultural Resources

A Phase I archeological survey of the project area was accomplished as part of a basewide survey in 1995. No significant cultural sites were recorded in the proposed project areas. The archeological site recorded nearest the area of potential effect (APE) is located about 2,000 feet southeast of the APE (Site 9LW62); this site was determined to be ineligible for National Register Listing. A historic building survey was conducted in 1999 by Gulf South Research, Inc., on behalf of the installation (Survey of Historic Buildings and Structures at Moody Air Force Base, Lowndes and Lanier Counties, Georgia, Gulf South Research, Inc.) Based on this survey, it was determined that the nearest historic building potentially eligible for National Register Listing is the Water Tower (Building 618), located approximately 8,000 feet east of the proposed project location.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Air Resources

4.1.1 Proposed Action

Disturbances to air resources would primarily include only those caused during the construction activities. These disturbances would consist of emissions from equipment used for construction and demolition and would be of short-term duration and would not affect Moody AFB's existing synthetic minor air permit.

A review of the design specifications for the civil engineering facility must be completed prior to implementation to ensure compliance with the existing synthetic minor air permit. This review will determine whether a permit modification will be needed. Permit modifications could be triggered by the installation of boilers, emergency generators, or any specialized equipment that may be required in the facility.

However, even if permit modifications are required, there will not be any significant lasting impacts on air quality on Moody AFB or in Lowndes County as a result of implementation of this action.

4.1.2 Alternative Site A

Disturbances to air resources would be identical to those for the proposed action. Therefore, there would not be any significant impacts on air quality as a result of implementation of this alternative.

4.1.3 The "No Action" Alternative

There are no anticipated impacts on air resources as a result of this alternative.

4.2 Vegetation Resources

4.2.1 Proposed Action

As a result of the proposed action, a few trees would have to be removed. However, the final development plan for the new building includes landscaping which will result in the planting of several native ornamental trees. Also, the existing trees are not native species to this area, and President Clinton directed federal facilities to promote the planting of native species in a letter dated 26 April 1994, "Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Practices on Federal Landscaped Grounds." Therefore, the loss of these exotic trees would not be considered a significant impact on vegetation resources.

4.2.2 Alternative Site A

As a result of the implementation of this alternative, a few small native trees would have to be removed. However, these trees are common species, and numerous individual trees are located throughout the installation. Therefore, their removal would not result in a significant impact on vegetation resources through the implementation of this alternative.

4.2.3 The "No Action" Alternative

There are no anticipated impacts on vegetation resources as a result of this alternative.

4.3 Water Resources

4.3.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action will result in a slight increase in impervious surfaces. However, this slight increase will not result in a significant increase in storm water managed by the installation. There is a slight potential for soil erosion and sedimentation resulting from the construction activities, but best management practices will be implemented to minimize erosion and to prevent sediments from leaving the site.

Because the size of the proposed disturbance area is greater than 1.0 acres, a Lowndes County Land Disturbing Permit, as required by the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act, will be obtained. This permit requires the implementation of best management practices to minimize erosion and to control sediments on a construction site.

Additionally, Moody AFB will file a Notice of Intent to discharge storm water associated with construction activities under General Permit GAR1000003 as required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations of the Clean Water Act and the Georgia Water Quality Control Act (Georgia Laws 1964, p. 416, as amended). This permit requires that an Erosion, Sedimentation, and Pollution Control Plan including best management practices and monitoring of streams receiving storm water be submitted to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) prior to implementation of the proposed action. Following the completion of the project, a Notice of Termination must be filed with the Georgia EPD.

Therefore, because of these regulatory requirements and the implementation of best management activities, there will be no significant impacts to water resources as a result of implementation of this alternative.

4.3.2 Alternative Site A

Impacts to water resources would be similar in size and scope to the proposed action. Therefore, because of these regulatory requirements and the implementation of best

management activities, there will be no significant impacts to water resources as a result of implementation of this alternative.

4.3.3 The "No Action" Alternative

There are no anticipated impacts on water resources as a result of this alternative.

4.4 Cultural Resources

4.4.1 Proposed Action

The proposed location for this project is currently a previously disturbed urban/suburban area consisting primarily of a paved parking lot. Based on the Phase I cultural survey and the historic building survey conducted in 1999 (Survey of Historic Buildings and Structures at Moody Air Force Base, Lowndes and Lanier Counties, Georgia, Gulf South Research, Inc.), intact archeological and historic resources are not likely to be found in the proposed site. The only anticipated impact to cultural resources from this alternative results from visual changes to the landscape in the vicinity of Bldg 618, the Water Tower. However, as the land use of the proposed project area will not change as a result of the proposed action, it is believed the impact will not be adverse. Therefore, there will not be any significant impacts to cultural resources as a result of implementation of this alternative. Per 36 CFR 800, the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will be consulted prior to implementation.

4.4.2 Alternative Site A

The proposed location for this project is currently a vacant landscaped area between the CES parking lot and the Contracting Squadron facility. Based on the Phase I archeological survey and the project location, intact archaeological and historic resources are not likely to be found in the proposed site. Therefore, no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated. Per 36 CFR 800, the Georgia SHPO will be consulted prior to implementation of this alternative.

4.4.3 "no action" Alternative

No impacts to cultural resources would occur under this alternative.

5.0 Cumulative Effects

Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations stipulate that potential environmental effects resulting from cumulative impacts should be considered within an environmental assessment (EA). Cumulative impacts are defined as "the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions" (40 CFR 1508.7). Recent CEQ guidance in "Considering Cumulative Effects" affirms this requirement, stating that the first steps in assessing cumulative effects involve defining

the scope of the other actions and their interrelationship with the proposed action. The scope must consider geographic and temporal overlaps among the proposed action and other actions. It must also evaluate the nature of the interactions among these actions. In accordance with NEPA, a discussion of cumulative impacts resulting from projects that are proposed, currently under construction, recently completed, or anticipated to be implemented in the near future is necessary.

The following projects in the immediate vicinity of the proposed action are either proposed for implementation in the near future or have recently been completed:

5.1 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

5.1.1 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions at Moody AFB

South Gate Improvements. The south entrance gate to the installation was recently improved and redesignated as the Main Gate for the installation. This action included the widening of Robbins Road, the expansion of the guard shack, and the relocation of the Visitor's Center to this location.

Replacement of Boundary Fence. The existing chain link fence between Bemiss Road and the installation is proposed to be replaced by a new fence that will be both decorative and protective and that will improve security for installation personnel.

5.1.2 Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions Outside of Moody AFB

Bemiss Road Widening. Bemiss Road (Georgia State Highway 125) was recently widened by the Georgia DOT. This construction resulted in the addition of turn lanes and raised concrete medians from the City of Valdosta to the Barretts Community north of Moody AFB. This highway bisects the installation and divides the housing area from the main part of the installation.

5.2 Cumulative Effects Analysis

No significant impacts were identified in the analysis of the proposed action by itself. The incremental contribution of effects of the proposed action, when considered with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions would be negligible. Therefore, no significant cumulative impacts would result from the proposed action.

6.0 List of Agencies Consulted

In accordance with 32 CFR 989, *Environmental Impact Analysis Process*, and directives from 347 RQW/JA, the following agencies and Governmental organizations were consulted before finalization of the EA and finding of no significant impact: Georgia State Clearinghouse, Georgia Historic Preservation Division, Lowndes County Board of Commissioners, City of Valdosta, and Lanier County Commission.

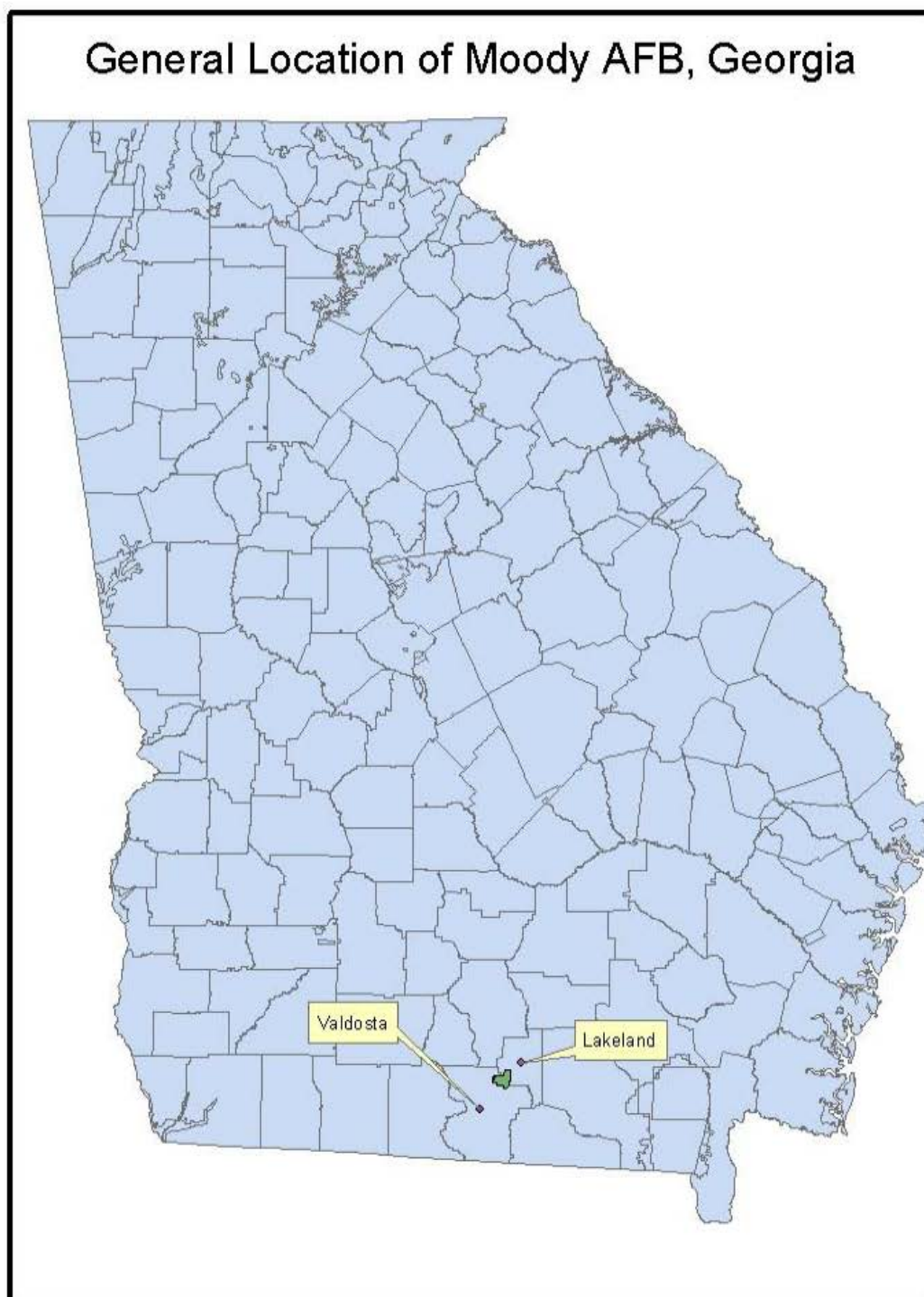


Figure 1